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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

Costs of staff representation activities

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in section X, paragraph 1, of its resolution 46/185 B of 20 December 1991, requested the Secretary-General to review the nature and level of regular budget funding of Staff Union activities and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

A. Mandates for staff-management and staff representational activities

2. Article VIII of the Staff Regulations, as amended by section II of General Assembly resolution 37/235 C of 21 December 1982, provides that the Secretary-General shall establish and maintain continuous contact and communication with the staff in order to ensure the effective participation of the staff in identifying, examining and resolving issues relating to staff welfare. Staff representative bodies shall be established and entitled to initiate proposals to the Secretary-General for this purpose. That article also stipulates that the Secretary-General shall establish joint staff-management machinery at both local and Secretariat-wide levels to advise him regarding personnel policies and general questions of staff welfare.

3. Further to the above, staff rule 108.1 provides, inter alia, that staff representative bodies shall be established at Addis Ababa, Amman, Bangkok, Geneva, Jerusalem, Nairobi, New York, Santiago and Vienna, and that staff representative bodies may also be established at other duty stations, each of which may affiliate with a staff representative body at one of these duty stations.

4. According to staff rule 108.2, the joint staff-management machinery referred to above shall consist of joint advisory committees or corresponding staff-management bodies at designated duty stations, and the annual Staff-Management Coordinating Committee (SMCC) at the Secretariat level. The Secretary-General shall designate Secretaries of the joint staff-management bodies and shall arrange for such services as may be necessary for their proper functioning.

5. Facilities to be provided to staff representatives are defined in administrative instruction ST/AI/293 of 15 July 1982. It specifies that the functions of staff representatives are official and that staff representatives as well as staff representative bodies shall be afforded such facilities as may be required to enable them to carry out their functions promptly and efficiently, while not impairing the efficient operation of the Organization. Each Staff Council, Staff Committee or corresponding staff representative body shall be provided with secretarial assistance, office space and supplies as may be necessary for the proper discharge of their functions. They shall also have use of telephone and cable communication facilities and shall be accorded facilities for reproduction and distribution of notices, bulletins and other documents required for proper discharge of their functions subject to procedures and considerations governing the use of such facilities.

6. Paragraph 10 of the same administrative instruction stipulates that the President or Chairman of the Executive Committee of each Staff Council or corresponding staff representative body at the above-mentioned duty stations, if he or she requests it, can be released from assigned duties during his or her term of office either full-time, if the number of staff represented is 1,000 or more, or half-time, if the number of staff represented is less than 1,000.

7. ST/AI/293 also stipulates that staff representatives shall be granted reasonable official time to attend established meetings of the Staff Council or corresponding staff representative body as well as other representational activities (such as meetings with supervisors or managers) provided that the proportion of official time spent by staff members on representational activities should not be unreasonable in relation to the carrying out of assigned duties. Staff representatives duly designated to attend intra-organizational, inter-organizational or intergovernmental meetings shall be placed on official duty status for the time required to attend such meetings, including appropriate travel time.

B. Funding for staff-management activities

8. It should be noted that while the Staff Rules do provide for both staff-management and staff representation activities, it is only the former which are budgeted, namely in the form of travel to the Staff-Management Coordinating Committee. 1/ As described in the Secretary-General's bulletin, 2/ SMCC holds annual meetings which alternate between New York and other duty stations. The Committee has 19 members: 9 staff representatives

from major duty stations, 9 senior administrators from several duty stations and a President. Thus the regular budget provides for the travel and subsistence expenses of the 19 members of SMCC, 4 alternates as well as the Secretary and a Legal Adviser. In the 1990-1991 biennium the revised appropriation for SMCC travel amounted to $200,000 while the actual expenditures amounted to $232,900. The resources appropriated for 1992-1993 amount to $204,500. To decrease expenditures for this item, measures were taken to limit venues of these meetings to two duty stations with a major concentration of staff - New York and Geneva. Of the six last sessions of SMCC, four were held in New York and two at Geneva.

C. Funding for staff representation activities

9. Staff representation activities are not explicitly budgeted but rather absorbed under the regular budget through the provision of staff time and facilities, as per ST/AI/293 (see above). Accordingly, information on the level of expenditures can only be collected on an ex post facto basis, and figures provided in the table appearing in the annex to the present report refer to 1990-1991 only. The estimates have been arrived at on the basis of input from the various duty stations and it is clear that, due to different needs and circumstances, the application of ST/AI/293 is not uniform. In addition, since these items are not budgeted expenditures and thus are not recorded against a specific allotment account code, the figures are reasonable approximations, but can only be considered indicative.

10. As can be seen from the annex, the costs of staff representation activities have been estimated at $1,531,700 for the biennium 1990-1991.

11. The largest item of those expenditures is staff costs, which have been estimated at revised 1990-1991 rates. The figures refer to the Presidents of the staff representative bodies and support staff but not to any other releases which may be authorized in the context of ST/AI/293 referred to in paragraph 7 above. Their volume is determined by various factors, such as whether support staff has been provided to the Staff Committees (as is the case at most major duty stations), the level of the President of the staff representative body and whether he or she is released full-time or part-time. At some duty stations staff representatives have at times opted for performing Staff Union functions in their free time, and thus only days away from the duty stations on staff issues are counted. These figures could thus vary from one biennium to another.

12. During 1990, at Vienna, for example, there were three Presidents in a period of 12 months who carried out their Staff Council duties outside working hours, and therefore no costs were incurred under this item in 1990. The current President of the Staff Council spends 50 per cent of working hours on Staff Council activities, and correspondingly, half of his salary and respective staff costs are considered as costs of staff activities.

13. Expenditures on office space represent the actual cost of rental space or replacement cost at local market rates if space were rented for other purposes. No costs have been estimated for meeting servicing since interpretation, where required, is provided at duty stations such as Geneva only on an "as available" basis.

Notes

1/ See A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1, sect. 41.

2/ ST/SGB/176/Rev.2 of 4 April 1991.

Annex

ESTIMATED COSTS OF STAFF UNION ACTIVITIES FOR THE 1990-1991 BIENNIUM

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	STAFF COSTS	GOE/ OFFICE SPACE	SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT	DOCUMENTATION	COMMUNICATIONS	TOTAL
	1990-1991 COSTS	1990-1991 COSTS	1990-1991 COSTS	1990-1991 COSTS	1990-1991 COSTS	1990-1991 COSTS
NEW YORK	273.5[1/]	106.4	2.0	81.7	5.6	469.2
GENEVA (UNOG)	409.6[2/]	134.9	5.0	127.9	20.5	697.9
ADDIS ABABA (ECA)	39.4[3/]	12.1	8.0	4.5	2.0	66.0
AMMAN (ESCWA)	8.0[4/]	-	0.5	0.4	5.6	14.5
BANGKOK (ESCAP)	65.6[5/]	-	0.5	3.2	1.5	70.8
NAIROBI (UNCHS, UNEP)	20.7[6/]	8.4	3.2	-	2.3	34.6
SANTIAGO (ECLAC)	47.1[7/]	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	54.1
VIENNA (UNOV)	84.0[8/]	15.0	11.6	0.9	1.0	112.5
JERUSALEM (FIELD SERVICE)	11.5[9/]	-	0.1	-	0.5	12.1
TOTAL	959.4	279.8	31.9	219.6	41.0	1531.7

1/ Refers to 1 P-4 (1991), 1 P-5 (1990) staff presidents and two full-time GS (other level) support staff.

2/ Refers to the full-time P-5 staff president during 1990-1991 and to the two GS (other level) staff members who support the staff committee full-time.

3/ Refers to 1 GS (other level) support for staff matters.

4/ Refers to part-time GS (other level) staff.

5/ Refers to 10 work-months for 1 P-5, 2 work-months for 1 P-4 and 1 GS (other level) at half-time.

6/ Refers to half-time for 1 GS (principal level) and 2 GS (other level).

7/ Refers to 1 GS (other level) support to the staff committee.

8/ Refers to half-time for 2 GS (other level).

9/ Refers to 49 days on official business for Staff Union activities.